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The Eastern Supervisors' Conference

The Eastern Music Supervisors' Conference, through the columns of **THE MUSIC SUPERVISORS' JOURNAL**, extends its most cordial greetings to fellow supervisors at this, the beginning of a new school year. Even at this time the future is bright with promises for successful conferences in the spring of 1923. The Eastern, with its large membership well represented in the National, feels the strongest urge, with its kindred interests and ideals, to help in the accomplishment of those many aims which will contribute so largely to giving music the attention in the educational scheme to which it is entitled. We look forward with co-operative interest to the meeting in Cleveland, for at successive meetings, such as the recent one at Nashville, is there disseminated that professional good fellowship which is the best augury of sympathetic understanding.

The Eastern wishes also to utilize the columns of the **JOURNAL** to extend congratulations to the newly formed Southern Conference. It is a courageous step, fraught with the brightest promise of service to the common good of music education. Although much of the territory included within the natural domain of the Southern Conference has been within the perspective of the Eastern since its organization in 1917, yet the practical difficulties of the problems of the South have precluded the possibility of much practical help from the rank



JAMES D. PRICE
President
Eastern Supervisors' Conference

and file of the Eastern Conference. It is evident that mere distances, outside of the differences in educational problems, offer a serious obstacle, just as that alone was one of the chief elements which prompted the organization of the Eastern. Our common interest is at once the hope and blessing of our several organizations.

By way of clarifying the situation in the minds of supervisors at large it might be said that the Eastern can serve effectively and with propriety the eastern states north of Virginia. This does not imply that memberships further south will not be welcome. Quite the contrary, they will be more than welcome and will be served as unselfishly as is possible. It does imply, however, that needless duplication of organization and effort would serve no good end for the available force would be sooner dissipated.

September 1 marked the beginning of the sixth year of the Eastern Conference. The five years which have passed have been blest with reasonable accomplishment and have been doubly blest with organizations which have given unselfishly of their best. A brief resume will not be inappropriate. During the winter of 1916-17 there appeared a growing conviction among many supervisors in the east that there should be a convention of music educators which could be made more available to the great body of supervisors in this part of the coun-

try, and which would be free from the frequently prohibitive expense of a trip to the meeting of the National Supervisors' Conference. The development of this idea took tangible form in an informal meeting of representatives of some of the eastern states held in June, 1917. A temporary organization was there elected which met in October of that year for the purpose of making its organization permanent. With what success it has persisted is a matter of common knowledge, for it is indelibly written in the books of proceedings published each year as an appropriate sequel to each convention. The successive meetings have been in Hartford, in New York, in Boston and in Springfield. The Conference can point with pardonable pride to a continuance of the original idea which may be summed up in the statement that it seeks to be available, helpful and co-operative in the broadest and most unselfish sense.

By the time this article goes to press the date and place of meeting for 1923 may be announced. It has been under the consideration of the Executive Board for some time which will make known its decision at an early date.

And at this time it will not be inappropriate to review briefly some of the points of contact of the several Conferences. Experience has dictated that practicability of the business organization as it is at present constituted. It is a self evident fact that no one conference could be more than passively helpful to the country at large due to the geographical difficulties, the mere matter of miles. To the East this cannot be as evident as to the middle and extreme West. A Western Conference, therefore, would make a generous contribution to the good of the cause. Our larger interests would be identical, our individual

problems dissimilar. The frank recognition of both the unselfishness of our mutual aims and the unity of our interests will go far toward clarifying the purposes of the Conferences, where clarification is necessary. Only by a sympathetic understanding, combined with a hundred per cent financial support, can the Conferences be the vitalizing factor that is an integral part, even the corner stone of the ideals on which each was founded.

There is, as is needful in the early years of such organizations, superfluous duplication of effort. Take, for instance, the labor required to present a valuable bibliography, a graded orchestra list, an analysis, with recommendations, of usable part songs, a list of printed forms for the better organization of school music. Are there not here superfluous duplications? Could there not be one supervisors' journal, with adequate attention to the various distinct problems, a periodical which have a circulation not only among supervisors but among the rank and file of music teachers, who not only would find it helpful and interesting, but who would there find contact with the public school music supervisor, an end greatly to be desired?

It is not too much to hope that the advantages of occasional joint meetings, milestones, so to speak, in the evolution of public school music education, may be apparent. These problems press for solution, which, after all, are only a matter of organization detail, for with the conviction that the cause is worthy of a lifetime of effort, with a knowledge of a unity of interests, an appreciation of the practical difficulties of distance, expense and kindred details, the solution of these elements, I repeat, awaits only the courage and vision of those who have music education most at heart. JAMES D. PRICE.